MULTIMEDIA UNIVERSITY

STUDENT ID NO

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FINAL EXAMINATION

TRIMESTER 3, 2015 / 2016

PGP 1010 – ENGLISH FOR GENERAL PURPOSES

(All Groups)

3 JUNE 2016
9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.
(2 Hours)

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS

1. This question paper consists of **12** printed pages.
2. Answer **ALL** questions in **Sections A** and **B**.
3. Shade all your answers for Section A on the OMR sheet.
4. Write your essay for Section B in the space provided in the Question Paper.

SECTION A: READING COMPREHENSION [30 MARKS]

Instructions: There are thirty questions in this section. For each question, choose the most appropriate answer.

Questions 1 to 7 are based on the following passage.

1 According to NASA experts, as glaciers melt due to climate change and add more water into the ocean, the increasingly hot and parched Earth is absorbing some of that water inland, slowing sea level rise. Satellite measurements over the past decade have shown for the first time that the Earth's continents have soaked up and stored an extra 3.2 trillion tonnes of water in soils, lakes and underground aquifers. Consequently, this has temporarily slowed the rate of sea level rise by about 20 per cent.

2 "We always assumed that people's increased reliance on groundwater for irrigation and consumption was resulting in a net transfer of water from the land to the ocean," said J.T. Reager of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. "What we didn't realise until now is that over the past decade, changes in the global water cycle more than offset the losses that occurred from groundwater pumping, causing the land to act like a sponge, at least temporarily. The global water cycle involves a large amount of water evaporates from the ocean, falls over land as rain or snow, and returns to the ocean through runoff and river flows," he added.

3 However, the effects of this kind of land storage on sea level rise have remained unknown until now because there are no land-based instruments that are able to measure such changes in all parts of the world. Nevertheless, the 2002 launch of NASA's Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) twin satellites provided the first tool capable of measuring land liquid water storage trends. By measuring the distance between the two GRACE satellites to within the width of a strand of human hair as they orbit the Earth, researchers are able to detect changes in Earth's gravitational pull that result from regional changes in the amount of water across Earth's surface. With careful analysis of these data, scientists were able to measure the change in liquid water storage on the continents, as well as the changes in ice sheets and glaciers.

4 Researchers learned that the water gains over land were spread globally, but taken together they equal the volume of Lake Huron, the world's seventh largest lake. They also said that the findings will help scientists calculate sea level changes better in the years ahead. Over the longer term, however, there is still very good evidence that sea levels are rising, and will continue to do so for at least the next century. The United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicts that sea levels could rise as much as 21 feet over the next 100 years, and that might be accelerated further if melting happens quicker at the core of a glacier than expected. If all the glaciers on Earth were to melt, it would be enough to raise sea levels by about 197 feet worldwide.

5 According to Jay Famiglietti, a professor at the University of California, Irvine, "These findings will lead to a refinement of global sea level budgets, such as those presented in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports,

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which acknowledge the importance of climate-driven changes in hydrology, but the reports have been unable to include any reliable estimate of their contribution to sea level changes. However, a much longer data record is needed to fully understand the underlying cause of the patterns and whether the trend will persist." 40

Adapted from Rundle, M. 2016. Sea level rise slowed by parched 'sponge-like' continents. Retrieved from: http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2016-02/12/sea-level-rise-slowing.

1. In paragraph 1, the writer indicates that the increase in sea level
   A. is resulting in floods in many places.
   B. is causing more glaciers to melt and climate to change.
   C. is slowing down because the earth is soaking up the water.

2. The word reliance (line 8) can best be replaced by the word
   A. need
   B. absorption
   C. dependence

3. The writer mentions "...changes in the global water cycle more than offset the losses." (lines 11-12) What does the writer mean?
   A. Changes in the global water cycle have reduced groundwater.
   B. Changes in the global water cycle have used up a lot of water for irrigation and consumption.
   C. Changes in the global water cycle have helped to replenish the reduced water supply due to groundwater pumping.

4. The main idea of paragraph 3 is about
   A. the potential dangers of rising sea level.
   B. the importance of land liquid water storage.
   C. the first instrument used to measure land liquid water storage trend.

5. Which of the following statements is **correct**?
   A. Water absorbed by the Earth is spread equally over the globe.
   B. Water absorbed by the Earth is in Lake Huron, the world's seventh largest lake.
   C. Scientists will be able to calculate sea level changes more accurately in the future.

6. According to the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,
   A. the core of glaciers is always the first to melt.
   B. there will be a continuous increase in sea level rise.
   C. the sea level will increase by about 197 feet in the next 100 years.

7. The purpose of this article is to
   A. inform
   B. criticise
   C. provide solutions

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*Questions **8** to **15** are based on the following passage.*

1 Honoured for his charitable works, Mervyn Barrett was ready for a change. He decided to run for police commissioner of Lincolnshire, encouraged by a trusted new employee who offered not only to manage his campaign but also to fund it with the help from his mother. The man took on everything from pamphlets to social media, and swiftly delivered evidence of Mr Barrett's rising popularity. Therefore, no one raised an eyebrow when he asked for access to Mr Barrett's private bank account, to cover expenses when his mother was unreachable. Alas, Mr Barrett suddenly had to end his candidacy, having discovered that his so-called campaign manager had drained his account of £84,000 ($135,000), and left bills worth another £16,000.

2 Humans are a trusting sort. This is largely a good thing, as progress requires co-operation, and co-operation demands trust. Countries with higher levels of trust grow faster and have more stable public institutions. Trusting citizens are healthier, happier and more likely to start their own businesses. People can be bad at spotting deception because, ultimately, very few are downright deceptive. This is great news for humanity. It is also a boon for crooks.

3 Confidence artists are the "aristocrats of crime", writes Maria Konnikova in "The Confidence Game", a fascinating look at the psychology behind every hustle, from Bernie Madoff's Ponzi scheme to a three-card-monte game. The beauty of a good con is that it relies solely on persuasion: victims give willingly, and many never discover that they have been had.

4 Studies show that people are often more swayed by compelling narratives than by hard evidence. Swindlers know this. Ms Konnikova tells of hucksters masquerading as doctors, royals or moguls, all armed with a gifted imagination, a silver tongue and an ability to size people up. Con artists also know that nearly everyone wants to hear about how they are special, lucky, clever or destined for great things. With a little insight into someone's hopes and dreams, it is possible to make him or her believe almost anything.

5 Circumstances matter. People are more inclined to trust someone who seems a bit like them, or to like someone they want to be associated with. The isolated or lonely are especially susceptible, particularly during a difficult transition, such as a job loss, divorce or serious injury. Debt makes people more prone to fraud of any sort, perhaps because of a mix of desperation and anxiety encourages wishful thinking.

6 Con artists or swindlers often take the opportunity to exploit the feelings of uncertainty especially during wars and political disturbances. This helps explain why the "advance of technology heralds a new golden age of the grift," Ms Konnikova writes, as it has upended everything from dating to shopping. Consumer fraud in America has risen by more than 60 per cent since 2008; online scams have more than doubled. The most common con involves fake weight-loss products, but some ploys are more ambitious. The book includes the sad tale of Paul Frampton, a distinguished physics professor who was convicted of drug smuggling in 2012 after he was caught with a suitcase he believed was for his beloved—a supermodel he had met only online—but which had cocaine stashed in the lining.

7 Big hustles are relatively rare, but low-level fraud is fairly common: a little

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more than one in ten Americans has fallen victim to some consumer schemes, according to the Federal Trade Commission. However, few con artists are ever brought to trial, and many scams go unreported. Some victims are wary of looking like a fool. Those same psychological quirks that make humans so gullible also make many wonderfully adept at dismissing failures. Instead of learning from errors of judgement, many spin new stories about dumb luck, and continue to believe that they are special in some way. This self-deception is quite useful. It often makes people happier, more productive, more creative and more empathetic. It also, alas, makes it easier for swindlers to strike again.

Adapted from Konnikova, M. 2016. Fool me once. Retrieved from http://www.economist.com/news/books-and-arts/21692840-why-people-are-so-easily-had-fool-me-once

8. Mervyn Barrett's trusted employee did all of the following **except**
   A. managed and funded Barrett's police commissioner campaign
   B. provided Barrett with proof to show that Barrett was gaining popularity
   C. protected Barrett's personal bank account and made sure he was cleared of any debts.

9. What is the main idea of paragraph 2?
   A. The pros of being trusting
   B. The steps to build trust among people
   C. The ways crooks deceive trusting people.

10. What is the "beauty" that is mentioned in paragraph 3?
    A. A good con could be fascinating.
    B. A good con only utilises the power of persuasion.
    C. A good con could be carried out by aristocrats of crime

11. Below are some characteristics of a con artist **except**
    A. They like to flatter people with their words.
    B. They are imaginative, articulate and observant.
    C. They could be doctors, royals or moguls in real life.

12. Con artists prey particularly on people who are
    A. wishful thinkers.
    B. experiencing loneliness.
    C. searching for compatible companions.

13. The word "exploit" in line 35 can be replaced by the word
    A. trick
    B. abuse
    C. attack

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14. Which of the following statements is **true**?
    A. Wars and political upheavals force people to become con artists.
    B. Fake weight-loss products are the most common online scams targeted at consumers.
    C. Paul Frampton who was a distinguished physics professor was also a con man who tricked someone into becoming a drug mule.

15. Why did the writer say that "this self-deception is quite useful" (lines 53-54)?
    A. It helps swindlers to strike again at the next opportune time.
    B. It helps people to remain positive despite falling victim to frauds.
    C. It helps people to avoid looking like a fool by not reporting the scams.

Questions 16 to 22 are based on the following passage.

1 The regulation of eight hours in the office is over. The most important work of the day is done; whatever is left can wait until the next morning. However, for millions of Japanese employees, the thought of clearing away their desks and being at home in time for dinner is enough to invite accusations of disloyalty.

2 However, after decades of giving companies carte blanche to milk every last drop of productivity from their workforce, a challenge to Japan's ingrained culture of overwork has come from the government, which is considering making it a legal requirement for workers to take at least five days' paid holiday a year.

3 Japanese employees are currently entitled to an average 18.5 days' paid holiday a year – only two fewer than the global average – with a minimum of 10 paid holidays as well as 15 one-day national holidays. In reality, few come even close to taking their full quota, typically using only nine of their 18.5 days average entitlement, according to the labour ministry. While many British workers regard a two-week summer holiday as an inalienable right, workers here have come to see a four-night vacation in Hawaii as the height of self-indulgence.

4 The move, to be debated in the current parliamentary session, comes after companies started encouraging employees to nap on the job to improve their performance. By the end of the decade, the government hopes that, if passed, the law will push Japanese employees towards following the example set by British workers, who use an average of 20 days' paid annual leave, and those in France, who take an average of 25.

5 Japan's unforgiving work culture may have helped turn it into an economic superpower, its corporate foot soldiers revered in the rest of the world for their commitment to the company, but this has often been to the exclusion of everything else. Japan's low birth rate and predictions of rapid population decline are partly blamed on the lack of time couples have to start families. More employees are falling ill from stress, or worse, succumbing to *karoshi*, death through overwork.

6 In spending 14 hours a day at work and giving up many of her paid holidays, Erika Sekiguchi is not even an extreme example. The 36-year-old trading company employee used eight of her 20 days of paid vacation last year, six of which counted as sick leave. "Nobody else uses their vacation days," Sekiguchi said. She faces the dilemma shared by her peers in companies across Japan: to take time off to recharge, or risk inviting criticism for appearing to leave more committed colleagues in the lurch.

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7 That fear of being ostracised at work is being blamed for a rise in stress-related illness, premature death and suicide. According to official data, about 200 people die every year from heart attacks, strokes and other *karoshi* events brought on by punishing work schedules.

8 Late last year, a court in Tokyo ordered a restaurant chain to pay compensation of ¥58m (£320,000) to the family of a former manager of one of its outlets who hanged himself in 2010 after being made to work punishingly long hours. Court documents show the man had worked almost 200 hours of overtime a month in the seven months before his death, a form of "power harassment" that the judge blamed for leaving the victim mentally ill.

9 The prime minister, Shinzo Abe, is not known for taking long vacations. However, even he has spoken out against the unreasonable demands that companies place on their employees as they struggle to stay afloat in a more complex globalised market. Japan's working culture, Abe said recently, "falsely glorified long hours" and a change in the work culture is necessary.

Adapted from McCurry, J. 2015. Clocking off: Japan calls time on long-hours work culture. Retrieved from http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/22/japan-long-hours-work-culture-overwork-paid-holiday-law

16. In the first paragraph, the writer's main intention is to highlight that Japanese employees
A. fulfil the required eight hours of work each day.
B. feel that going home in time for dinner is burdensome.
C. finish all the work for the day without leaving any for tomorrow.
D. feel that leaving after working hours could put their loyalty to question.

17. What is the government's measure to improve the current situation?
A. A new law that requires the employees to take at least five paid holidays a year
B. A new government department that monitors the productivity of the companies
C. A new system that checks the number of leave or sick leave that each employee takes
D. A new requirement for companies to declare the number of leave days given to their employees

18. Which statement about Japanese employees is **true**?
A. They utilise only 50 per cent of their annual leave entitlement.
B. They keep their paid leave to be brought forward to the next year.
C. They share similar views with their British counterparts with regard to off day from work.
D. They are given an equal number of paid holiday annually like the rest of the workers around the world.

19. Why are Japanese corporate employees respected by others globally?
A. Their high level of dedication to their company.
B. Their ability to juggle between family and work.
C. Their ability to serve as foot soldiers when the need arises.
D. Their willingness to put on hold their plans to start families.

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20. What is the dilemma that Japanese employees are experiencing?
    A. To take time off from work to recharge and be seen as weak.
    B. To utilise their sick leave and be seen as feigning to be sick.
    C. To work for more than 14 hours at work daily and be seen as inefficient.
    D. To take paid leave and be seen as leaving their colleagues with more work.

21. What does the term *Karoshi* in paragraph 5 (line 27) mean?
    A. Criticism from colleagues
    B. Complaints from the bosses
    C. Casualties from overworking
    D. Constant pressure from the management

22. Japan's prime minister felt that working for long hours is
    A. bearable
    B. necessary
    C. overrated
    D. justifiable

Questions **23** to **30** are based on the following passage.

1 While "you are what you eat" is considered a cliché these days, the impact of taking in too many saturated fats, simple sugars, and foods high in cholesterol cannot be underestimated. Obesity has become an epidemic in most developed countries with horrendous economic costs in terms of greater need for health care, shortened lives, and lost work hours. Recent research has found a strong link between high fat, high sugar "Western diets" (WD for short) and various neurological conditions such as Parkinson's disease, dementia, and stroke. Western diets can also have a drastic impact on memory and our ability to learn.

2 To examine which areas of the brain are most vulnerable to WD exposure, animal research studies have been especially valuable. Research studies comparing the rats with diet-induced obesity (DIO) to their leaner counterparts in terms of brain functioning suggested that much of the damage caused by this kind of diet seems to focus on that region of the brain known as the hippocampus.

3 A critical part of the brain's limbic system, the hippocampus is especially important in memory functioning and spatial navigation. In Alzheimer's disease and other kinds of dementia, the hippocampus is one of the first areas of the brain to be affected leading to patients becoming unable to form new memories. Cognitive testing in rats has shown that damage to the hippocampus can lead to increased weight gain since rats begin eating indiscriminately, whether or not they are hungry. Even in rats without obesity, greater exposure to high-fat, high-sugar diets can lead to cognitive impairments specifically linked to the hippocampus.

4 However, why does exposure to a Western-type diet affect the hippocampus in particular? Part of the answer may involve damage to the blood-brain barrier (BBB) that protects the brain from potentially harmful toxins carried in the bloodstream. Formed along capillaries in the brain, *it* allows water, oxygen, and certain fat-soluble molecules in the blood to cross over into the brain. This helps to maintain the delicate balance that keeps the brain functioning properly. The high-fat, high-sugar Western diets and obesity seems to be factors that can compromise

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the effectiveness of the BBB in keeping neurotoxic substances in the blood from entering the brain.

5 A new research study published in the journal Behavioral Neuroscience provides a closer look at the link between nutrition and how it affects the blood-brain barrier over time. A team of researchers led by Sara L. Hargrave at Purdue University used a group of 75 laboratory rats assigned to different experimental conditions based on diet (Western diet versus regular food) and level of exposure to Western diet (10, 40, or 90 days of feeding). The rats in all experimental conditions were otherwise identical in terms of body size, genetics, living conditions, and weight at the start of the experiment. All of the rats completed a series of learning tasks to measure how diet affected cognitive functioning.

6 Following the experiment, the rat brains were then examined and results indicated that rats fed on a Western-type diet for 90 days show strong evidence of greater blood-brain barrier permeability in the hippocampus. With the breakdown of the blood-brain barrier, toxins in the bloodstream are more likely to cross over into the brain and cause damage to brain cells. This effect seems to be very *gradual* since rats exposed to a Western diet for shorter periods of time show no problems. Changes in brain chemistry caused by diet and level of exposure also appears linked to poorer memory and problem-solving ability on tasks such as maze running. Rats exposed to a Western diet also tended to put on more weight and developed more body fat than the control rats.

7 While more research is definitely needed to see whether long-term exposure to Western diets has a similar effect on humans, this study could be important in understanding why we are currently facing an obesity epidemic in most industrialised countries. Even though the link between Western-type diets and obesity has long been known, understanding the exact mechanism behind this link could be crucial in finding better ways to fight obesity. Though there are no simple solutions to the kind of problems caused by poor nutrition, learning more about the potential impact of high-sugar, high-fat diets on the blood-brain barrier and the hippocampus can also help us understand how learning and memory are affected as a result.

8 While the obesity epidemic will likely be with us for a long time to come, coming to terms with the role that basic nutrition can play in our health can help control the numerous health problems that obesity and our own food choices can cause.

Adapted from Vitelli, R. (2016). Obesity, diet and your brain. Retrieved from https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/media-spotlight/201602/obesity-diet-and-your-brain

23. The main purpose of Paragraph 1 is to show that
    A. researchers have recently found the impact of western diets on our brains.
    B. developed countries have to control the epidemic of obesity in their countries.
    C. western diets are the main reason why many people are obese in developed countries.
    D. the consumption of saturated fats, sugar and high cholesterol food has to be reduced immediately.

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24. The following statements about the hippocampus are true, **except**
    A. Hippocampus helps a person to navigate his or her way around places.
    B. The hippocampus cannot be affected if a person is not suffering from obesity.
    C. A damaged hippocampus causes patients to be unable to retain new memories.
    D. An affected hippocampus causes weight gain as patients will not know if they are hungry or full.

25. What does *it* in paragraph 4 (line 25) refer to?
    A. The hippocampus
    B. Fat-soluble molecules
    C. The blood-brain barrier
    D. Exposure to Western-type diet

26. What is the best word that could replace the word *gradual* in paragraph 6 (line 44)?
    A. slow
    B. rapid
    C. immediate
    D. simultaneous

27. Which of the following is **true** about the experiment done on rats at Purdue University?
    A. The 90-day western diet rat brains showed a lower blood-brain barrier permeability.
    B. The rats that were put on the western diet recorded an increased weight but a lower body fat.
    C. The 90-day western diet rats had weaker memory abilities and a lower ability to solve problems when put on a task.
    D. The rats that were on the 90-day western diet showed marginal difference in abilities from the rats fed for 10 and 40 days of western diet.

28. What is the main idea of paragraph 7?
    A. The study of the fat found in the western diet could help people change their diet.
    B. The study of the potential danger of western diet will solve the crisis of poor nutrition.
    C. The study of the impact of western diets on rats can be used to explain the effect on humans.
    D. The study of the impact of western diet on the blood-brain barrier could help us understand its effects on our cognitive abilities.

29. What is the main purpose of this article?
    A. to expose the truth about western diets
    B. to encourage people to avoid the western diet
    C. to inform people of the impact of western diets on the brain
    D. to provide solution to obesity epidemic in developed countries

30. The writer ends his article by
    A. focusing on the role of nutrition.
    B. giving a balanced view of nutrition.
    C. comparing western and regular diets.
    D. making a sarcastic remark about western diet.

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SECTION B: WRITING [20 MARKS]

Instruction: You are advised to spend about **50 minutes** on this task.

The idea of home schooling is not a rare idea in Malaysia. Many parents are thinking of joining the bandwagon. Instead of enrolling their children to public schools, they prefer to teach or hire private tutors to teach their children at home. Do you think home schooling is better than public schooling? Discuss. You should write in at least **350 words**.

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